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Crisis Intelligence Branch

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WORKING DRAFT

COORDINATION OF NATIONAL WARNING AND CRISIS INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT

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Coordination of National Warning and Crisis

Intelligence Support

I - Introduction

1. The analysis and action proposals presented herein are intended to address the systemic inhibitions to more effective national warning and crisis intelligence support, that is, those factors which are not variables pertaining to one particular crisis or another. The proposals deal with a) the establishment of improved mechanisms for focusing Community warning and crisis intelligence support operations across organizational lines; b) development of a common Community alert level indicator system based on changes in target posture and capabilities rather than perception of ultimate intent; and c) reorientation of indications and warning analysis and reporting to increase support to crisis avoidance (deterrence) decisionmaking. Underlying these proposals are the following findings:

a. responsibility for warning and crisis intelligence support is, in practice, widely diffused throughout the Community and essentially lacking a coherent structure;

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b. as a result, Community components interact with one another and with intelligence users principally on a bilateral basis, there being no established central mechanism, other than the efforts of individual National Intelligence Officers, for efficiently coordinating collection, production and reporting with respect to situation-oriented* contexts across agency and program boundaries except on ad hoc basis; and

c. reliance on ad hoc procedures (which to some extent reflects analytical resource limitations), aside from their inherent inefficiency, limits the Community's capability to focus operations on developing situational contexts over an extended time frame in support of crisis avoidance** and to efficiently marshal its resources when necessary to assist in crisis management.

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* The term situation is used herein to mean an evolving set of interactive political, military and, perhaps, economic conditions and events taking place within or among nations which indicates potential for alteration of an existing state of affairs and consequent impact on US interests, objectives and/or security. Situational ambiguity is uncertainty regarding the nature, significance and underlying objective of observed events resulting from gaps in available intelligence and/or the acquisition of data susceptible to divergent interpretation.

** Crisis avoidance support is the orientation of intelligence collection, analysis and reporting so as to optimize the range, selection and timing of deterrent action options available to decisionmakers being supported.

II. Analysis of the Problem

The Function of Warning

2. The operational impact of the conditions outlined above is to render the Community and, consequently, those it supports extremely vulnerable to the effects of ambiguity in the situational environment (particularly that clouding the motive underlying observed activity), compounded by that created by the Community itself in its internal operations and their impact on National decisionmaking authorities. Thus, the review of Community performance on the eve of the 1973 Arab-Israeli War found:

The problem of incremental analysis--especially as it applies to the current intelligence process--was also at work in the period preceding hostilities. Analysts, according to their own accounts, were often proceeding on the basis of the day's take, hastily comparing it with material received the previous day. They then produced in "assembly line fashion," items which may have reflected preceptive intuition but which accrued from a systematic consideration of an accumulated body of integrated evidence.

Divisions of labor within the Community and within individual agencies may have contributed to this problem. Separate groups of analysts may examine different aspects of the same substantive problem, with little time or opportunity to review one another's product and to integrate subsequent analysis.

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The lack of an integrated systematic approach to warning problems may also have had an unfortunate effect on the analytical product. To oversimplify somewhat, analysts, in reacting against certain indicators, tended to conceive of the problem in terms of "war" vs. "no war" rather than in terms of the "likelihood" of war. There seemed to be no system designed to encourage the analysts who were evaluating the crisis to ponder events and indicators in the light of the warning function and the need for judgments of probabilities.*

3. Where intelligence can be relied upon to provide timely and unambiguous insight into the development of a given situation and the underlying intentions and timetables of its dominant actors, the impact of the aforementioned problems is minimized, insofar as information collected speaks for itself and its implications are apparent. Historically, however, such cases are extremely rare and existence of such optimal conditions cannot be presumed as a basis for organization of intelligence support operations.

4. Therefore, the function of warning intelligence is to alert the decisionmaker to the need for consideration of action options designed to hedge against ambiguity shrouding the implications of observed phenomena with respect to U.S. security and interests. This function is particularly

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* The Performance of the Intelligence Community Before the Arab-Israeli War of October 1973: A Preliminary Post-Mortem Report; Intelligence Community Staff, December 1973, pp. 18-19.

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important in situations where such ambiguity may conceal an adversary's miscalculation of the potential reaction of the United States or "signals" intended to elicit a clarification of the U.S. position.

5. The act of "hedging," in the present context, is the selection and implementation of an action option (or a series thereof) calculated to have a deterrent or deflective impact on the course of an observed situation in the event the threat implications reflected by intelligence are accurate, while minimizing the cost and potential embarrassment to the United States (and the authority acting) in the event they are not. Thus, the term "action" may, depending on the context and the decisionmaker's perception, mean anything from a telephone call to an ambassador to mobilization of an army.

6. Community support of hedge action consideration by decisionmakers is time sensitive, insofar as the range of hedge options available tends to diminish with proximity to the event being hedged against, as does the opportunity for flexible application of a progression of initiatives should earlier signals not have the desired effect. In addition, the magnitude of the hedge action required for effective

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deterrence is increased to the extent its subject has become committed to his course of action and cannot extricate himself without loss. Therefore, there is a clear premium on early detection and reporting that is likely to be achieved only through continuous Community focus on the operational situations in question, as opposed to general reliance on ad hoc measures inspired by the perceived imminence or onset of a "crisis."

7. Further, it is inherent to the nature of the Intelligence-decisionmaker relationship that the operational significance of a given situation or item of information is not necessarily obvious, but rather may derive from objectives, views, and sensitive data held by the decisionmaker, but not generally apparent within the Community. In other words, a particular sequence of events or intelligence observations gains significance, as concerns the Community's level of effort and focus of warning support, primarily as it relates to how the United States, as represented by National decisionmaking authority, views that activity and what it might intend to do about it.

8. Thus, a warning and crisis intelligence support system dominated by the requirement to estimate or predict

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the ultimate objective underlying observed events or activity tends, operationally, to neglect the fact that ultimate responsibility for confronting the ambiguous implications of a particular situation belongs to the decisionmaker and not to the Community. While it is obviously desirable that the Community provide an unambiguous picture of what is happening in a given situational context and its probable significance, its inability to do so should not be permitted to result in delay or lack of warning to National authority of the need to consider hedge action requirements. 7

9. Given the subtlety of the warning mission, as related to hedge action, its effective fulfillment will be dependent on the Community's ability to structure the responsibility for issuance of warning and the collection and analysis support underlying such decisions so as to facilitate clear and timely definition of the hard data, uncertainties and potential implications upon which consideration of hedge action will be based. At present, however, the responsibility for issuance of warning has become merged with that for production of warning intelligence and diffused throughout the Community. No single, coherent structure exists for either systematically focusing collection and production operations on evolving warning-

related issues or for interaction with decisionmakers being supported. To the extent such integration occurs, it is undertaken on an ad hoc basis by individual NIOs in accordance with their perceived support requirements.

10. To effect interagency coordination, the Community is largely dependent on ad hoc working groups and individual analyst and NIO initiatives, insofar as the transitory nature of specific warning and crisis-potent situations inhibits their accommodation by the predominantly functional and topical structure of Community organization. An illustration of the negative effects of this problem is provided in a case study of intelligence coverage of the ongoing Egypt-Libya conflict appended as Annex B.

11. The foregoing observation is valid with regard to collection as well as analysis and reporting. Despite increasingly effective mechanisms for management and utilization of individual collection programs and systems, the Community lacks a coherent medium for effectively focusing and coordinating coverage of specific situations on a multi-source/sensor basis.* Tasking reflective of perceived

*The Collection Coordination Facility recently established by DIA is a promising initiative in this area. However, its scope of operation is currently limited to DOD requirements and support responsibilities.

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warning requirements is currently generated by individual initiative on the part of NIOs and the various production and consumer organizations and negotiated separately with each program manager. Annex C contains a review of present collection tasking and coordination practices.

12. In the absence of coherent structure, the Community is vulnerable to the disruptive effects of uncertainty created by differing perceptions of what is occurring in the operational environment resulting from fragmentary or ambiguous intelligence (situational ambiguity). Specifically, the conclusions and predictive estimates derived by each agency from its independent assessment of available information are influenced by those of sister agencies which may differ. Given the psychological deterrent to "crying wolf," an impetus toward consensus formation is created, generally aimed at negotiation of a mutually acceptable position rather than an integrated, Community reanalysis of all available data. Since the findings of the individual agencies, as well as those of interagency consensus forums and the DCI/NIO, are simultaneously and independently directed at decisionmakers in Community reporting, the effect on the latter is to compound uncertainty, thereby inhibiting establishment of a clear basis for hedge action consideration. In short, where all perceive themselves to be responsible for issuance of warning, in effect no one is.

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13. The preceding is not intended as an argument in favor of suppression of divergent views or the creation of a false impression of clear perception. The point is that, since developing international threat situations, especially in their early stages, will invariably be characterized by ambiguity shrouding the actual intentions of the principal actors, the only real alternative to timely hedge action against unresolvable ambiguity is, in effect, to do nothing. Where the warning intelligence process becomes driven by the need to accurately predict what is going to happen, the Community, in effect, directs its efforts toward findings which will prove to be either right or wrong. This contradicts the purpose of warning in contemplation of hedge action, the object of which is essentially to avoid being either right or wrong by altering the course of perceived threat development or at least minimizing its impact.

14. In this regard, it should be noted that the range of hedge action options available to the decisionmaker, particularly in the earlier stages of a developing crisis, will invariably be greater than the number of warning decision options available to the intelligence officer contemplating the implications of an ambiguous threat situation. This means that a delay in warning until a "war"- "no war" type prediction can be made would inhibit the former's

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scope of possible action in pursuit of crisis avoidance. In addition to alerting the decisionmaker to the need for consideration of hedge action, therefore, the function of warning intelligence is to provide him the insights into the operational situation at issue necessary to selection of the action option(s) most appropriate in terms of potential effectiveness, cost and risk.

15. The subtleties inherent in the above are extremely difficult to translate into analytical guidance at the intelligence production level, dependent as they are on active interaction between decisionmaker and senior (warning) intelligence authority. This effort is greatly complicated by the lack of a common structure in which the operations of the Community can be oriented toward support of hedge action consideration requirements across organizational boundaries. Because, in practice, no specific focus is established by common Community authority, warning objectives generally adopted are those which would have the greatest operational impact and could be most clearly postulated, i.e., the ultimate potential threat posed by the circumstances or activity being observed.

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16. The problem inherent in I&W analysis and production thus focused is that it tends to subsume responsibility for determining whether warning should be issued. Thus, an analytical element examining data to determine whether A is going to attack B is obligated to relate its findings to that hypothesis and, in the presence of inconclusive intelligence, the process becomes vulnerable to the contradiction noted above (paragraph 13) and consequent inability to provide timely warning in contemplation of hedge action. More important, however, the items of intelligence and kinds of analyses relevant to determination of the reality and imminence of an ultimate threat are not necessarily the same as those most useful in determining whether National authority should be alerted to the need for consideration of hedge action against that threat, particularly when a premium is placed on early notification so as to reduce the magnitude of action required for effective deterrence.

Crisis Management Support

17. It is possible to frame a definition of "crisis" by example, but extremely difficult to postulate a functionally useful operational description. In practice, crises are aberrations in normal agency activity requiring an extraordinary level of operations in the affected areas of coverage

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which, in turn, necessitates activation of ad hoc procedures and temporary reallocation of resources. At the conclusion of the crisis, the status quo ante is generally restored. This is due both to resource limitations (particularly analytical) and to changes in situational context from crisis to crisis which engender different expertise and resource requirements.

18. Community support procedures following the onset of a crisis exhibit the same characteristics of diffused responsibility ascribed earlier to the pre-crisis indications and warning environment. Insofar as activation of crisis management procedures is dependent upon the existence and common perception of an external stimulus, i.e., the cause of the crisis, they are vulnerable both to differing perceptions of the significance and requirements of observed events resulting from ambiguities in available intelligence and to the lag in operational effectiveness characteristic of ad hoc action during periods of stress. Crisis support measures, moreover, are taken independently by each organization involved, and there is no coordination mechanism at the Community level other than action undertaken by the NIO involved in support of the DCI. Beyond recently introduced procedures for integrated situation reporting (NISR), crisis

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related reporting to National decisionmaking authorities is conducted separately by each participating agency and the DCI/NIO.

19. Activation of Community crisis management support procedures only after a crisis has begun or its imminence generally perceived precludes effective operational linkage with the indications and warning process, thereby making the augmented collection and processing capabilities characteristic of the former unavailable to support hedge action consideration in the interest of crisis avoidance. In addition, it is apparent that the warning and crisis phases of a given situation are not operationally separable, insofar as the first does not end when the second begins, but merely transfers its point of focus to the future implications of crisis-related events. An example of this phenomenon occurred during the 1973 Middle East war wherein the warning phase preceding the Arab attack on Israel was immediately followed by a second warning phase concerned with the prospect of active Soviet intervention in the conflict.

20. Therefore, it would appear logical that mechanisms and procedures for provision of indications and warning intelligence support to national decisionmakers during pre-

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crisis periods be designed to also coordinate support during periods of active crisis management. While the requirement for ad hoc augmentation during crisis periods is inescapable, for the reasons noted earlier, the aforementioned structure would provide a baseline capability to make transition from warning to crisis operations smoother and more efficient, as well as creating the flexibility necessary to permit expansion of support to hedge action consideration in the extended pre-crisis period.

III. Conclusions and Recommendations

21. The preceding analysis indicates that the principal barriers to more effective Community performance in warning and crisis management support operations are the de facto diffusion of responsibility for performance of these missions within the Community and the consequent absence of a hierarchical structure for coordinating agency operations in these areas, for decisionmaking with respect to the issuance of warning, and for coherent interaction with decisionmakers being supported. Barring fundamental restructuring of Community organization and operations, remedial action would appear best directed toward the development of Community mechanisms and procedures designed to effectively coordinate

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the warning and crisis-related operations of component organizations and to integrate their product within a framework yielding a coherent stream of intelligence support to decisionmakers.

22. In particular, such mechanisms should provide a channel for bidirectional interaction between the Principal Warning Authorities and Community intelligence collection and production elements for the purpose of a) providing timely substantive support to fulfillment of the former's responsibility for issuance of warning to National authority; b) focusing the warning objectives against which the latter are conducting collection and analysis operations, particularly with respect to operational contexts in which a need for decisionmaker consideration of hedge action may be indicated; and c) ameliorating the disruptive effects on Community operations of restricted dissemination of sensitive intelligence and operations data pertinent to the analysis of warning and crisis related intelligence.

Joint DCI-DOD Initiatives

23. The senior Intelligence authorities responsible for the issuance of warning to National authorities (Principal

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Warning Authorities) in the context discussed in the preceding analysis, are the DCI and the Director, DIA acting as senior Intelligence advisor to the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. While the functions and responsibilities of each, in their full scope, differ widely, there is a broad area of convergence with respect to mutual requirements to provide warning and crisis management support to National decisionmaking and command authority. Moreover, measures taken to develop or improve focus and coordination of intelligence operations independently for each warning authority will not yield the desired effectiveness, insofar as a significant degree of diffusion would persist, given the existence of two points of focus and coordination.

It is, therefore recommended that development and operation of mechanisms and procedures for coordination of warning and crisis intelligence operations on a Community basis be undertaken jointly by the DCI and Director, DIA.

National Indications and Warning System

24. The principal substantive recommendation made is for the establishment of a National Indications and Warning System (NIWS) comprised of the following procedural and structural components:

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a. a procedural system for designation of National Warning Issues designed to provide early visibility to developing situational contexts which exhibit potential for adverse impact on US security or interests and, therefore, require focused Community coverage, perhaps over an extended time span, in support of the Principal Warning Authorities and National decisionmaking authority;

b. a common Community structure and set of procedural guidelines for substantive intelligence reporting against active National Warning Issues designed to facilitate substantive integration of multi-agency reporting and maintenance of continuity in situational development;

c. an Intelligence Alert Level indication system designed to reflect changes in target posture and rate of situational change rather than perception of the likelihood or imminence of an event requiring issuance of warning; and

d. a permanent operational element designed to serve as a medium of interaction between the Principal Warning Authorities and components comprising the

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Community's intelligence collection, analysis and production capabilities for the purpose of coordinating and focusing coverage of developing warning situations and active crisis management contexts.

25. The above are described in greater detail in Annex A. Collectively, their principal objective is the development of a integrated Community system which focuses the operations of line production elements and underlying collection assets, with respect to evolving situations indicating potential threat to US security or interests, so as to optimize fulfillment of the Principal Warning Authorities' responsibility to National authority for the timely issuance of warning.

26. With respect to internal Community indications and warning intelligence production operations, the proposed NIWS is designed to:

a. provide individual production agencies the capability to progressively alert consumers and other Community elements to warning related situational developments without the constraint of having to predict ultimate outcome in the presence of unresolvable situational ambiguity (i.e., issue warning);

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b. structure analysis and reporting related to specific National Warning Issues so as to emphasize the direction and rate of situational development during the time frame which the Issue is active;

c. by means of a National Warning Issue subsystem, provide a vehicle for reflecting the concerns and warning intelligence support requirements of decision-making and Principal Warning Authorities directly into the collection and production process on a timely basis and for insuring awareness of these concerns and requirements by all Community elements involved in related intelligence collection and production;

27. The proposed NIWS is designed to require no significant change in the current division of operational and management responsibilities within the Community. Thus, the organizational component of NIWS would serve primarily as a coordinative instrument of the Principal Warning Authorities (including, by extension, the NIO organization) for

a. providing to Community production elements timely guidance concerning analytical and reporting requirements related to specific situational indicators which would underlie a determination to issue warning in contemplation of hedge action;

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b. determining, upon establishment of a National Warning Issue, the current Community collection and production posture vis-a-vis the underlying situation, the capabilities to alter or expand that posture, and the impact of such changes on coverage of other intelligence targets;

c. maintaining, over the operational life of a National Warning Issue, comparative continuity of the intelligence indicators of changes in target capability and posture as related to the sources or sensors from which they were derived in order to optimize collection coverage of future changes and to estimate the prospects, in advance of warning issuance, that future intelligence collection will reduce or resolve existing situational (intent) ambiguity; WOW

d. advising Principal Warning Authorities of the occurrence of significant changes in the direction or rate of situational development with respect to active Warning Issues, recommending appropriate changes in analytical guidance or collection posture designed to determine whether observed developments require the issuance of warning; and

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- e. representing the Principal Warning Authorities in coordinating Community support to National authorities during periods of active crisis management.

28. The component itself would undertake no substantive intelligence production with respect to National Warning Issues, nor would it engage in resource management. Interaction with Community collection and production programs would be effected through established management authorities and mechanisms. Similarly, during active crisis management periods, the components operations would be conducted in conjunction with the mechanisms established by the various agencies and program managers for support of crisis operations.

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INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY STAFF

16 March 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Richard Lehman ✓
Mr. Cord Meyer
Mr. Vincent Heyman

FROM:


Chief, Crisis Intelligence
Branch/PAID

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Attached please find for your review and comment a draft paper titled Coordination of National Warning and Crisis Intelligence Support we are currently circulating informally to key Community and DCI Staff personnel. I would be happy to discuss its contents with you at your convenience.

I have not included Annexes B and C, since they are largely illustrative and contain information you undoubtedly already possess. However, they can be immediately provided should you desire them.

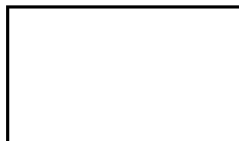
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Attachment:
As stated

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR: D/DCI/NI

This may be the single worst document I have reviewed in several years. If its author has a message it is not clear to me what it may be. I think he is proposing establishing some sort of management entity which would help to screw up crisis management. I truly think the only way to go on this is to ignore it. I will meet with [redacted] on Monday and I would tend to support the recommendation that Dick chat quietly with [redacted] and have the paper withdrawn.



Date 18 Mar 77

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Annex A

National Indications and Warning System Components

National Warning Issues

National Warning Issues (NWI) would be established by the Principal Warning Authorities (PWA), by major National and Defense intelligence consumers and by the principal intelligence production agencies. Establishment of an NWI would not, in itself, constitute issuance of warning.

A National Warning Issue would be, in effect, an aggregation of evolving international political and, perhaps, military circumstances and conditions bearing perceived potential for affecting the security or interests of the United States, directly or indirectly. The purpose of establishing an NWI would be to bring into timely operation mechanisms designed to coordinate Intelligence Community operations and reporting with respect to the designated situation so as to increase support to consideration of crisis avoidance action options by National authority. Therefore, NWI designation would not require unambiguous evidence of the imminence of the contemplated impact or of

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the intent of the actor(s) involved. Further, there would be no predetermined time limit with respect to establishment and maintenance of an NWI. However, given the basic purpose of NIWS, emphasis would be placed on early designation.

An NWI would normally be established by predication of the subject of concern, i.e., the impact on U.S. security and/or interests against which warning in support of potential U.S. crisis avoidance or defensive action is required. However, provision would be made for NWI designation on the basis of observed target activity alone, where potential direction of situational development cannot be immediately determined. An example of such a circumstance was the unusual CHICOM military activity in the provinces opposite Taiwan (summer 1976).*

Establishment of an NWI would engender two automatic effects: 1) coordinative monitoring of Community operations and production with respect to coverage of the situational context underlying the NWI would be assumed by the NIWS

*An NWI may also be established to coordinate intelligence coverage of possible or anticipated target reaction to a US initiative.

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coordinating element on behalf of the Principal Warning Authorities; and 2) Community Reporting on the subject or context of the NWI would be required to utilize the common NIWS framework and Intelligence Alert Level indicator subsystem outlined below. There would be no automatic impact on intelligence collection and processing posture; changes in these and related areas would be dictated by requirements of the designated situational context.

NIWS Reporting Framework

The principal objective of NIWS reporting with respect to a given Warning Issue would be to develop, over the time-event span in which the underlying situation is evolving, a dynamic representation of the direction and rate of such evolution on the basis of which the PWA could alert decision-makers being supported to the need for consideration of timely hedge action and the latter could affectively weigh the requirement for and nature of such action.

Thus, the NIWS reporting framework would be designed to facilitate:

- a. correlation of reported intelligence data acquisitions and derived analysis relevant to a par-

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ticular NWI across the spectrum of originating Community components and underlying information sources;

b. clear presentation of the nature, direction and rate of situational development through the maintenance of substantive continuity over successive reports by a particular Community component or intelligence source; this is viewed as particularly important where an NWI and its underlying situational context have been active for an extended period of time and the latter has undergone a number of directional changes, perhaps including several false warning alarms; and

c. alerting all Community components, through use of the associated Intelligence Alert Level subsystem, to perceived changes in the nature, direction or rate of target activity which may be indicative of situational development requiring the issuance of warning; insofar as the alert level assigned would not be a warning indicator, its use would not require predictive estimation of the ultimate outcome of observed activities, thereby reducing the deterrent psychological impact of intent ambiguity on timely alerting of Principal Warning Authorities.

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As a general objective, the NIWS reporting framework would be designed to impose few constraints on agency reporting practices and none on their judgmental prerogatives with regard to analytical findings. While reporting of all NWI-related data in the NIWS channel would be required, no restriction would be placed on parallel reporting in other vehicles and channels, nor would the system affect handling of reporting subjects not related to active NWIs.

Intelligence Alert Level Indicators

The purposes of this subsystem are 1) to overcome the operational discontinuity among Community components created by divergent perceptions of the significance of observed events in an ambiguous intelligence environment and 2) to relieve intelligence reporting components of the need to hedge their concerns with respect to the implications of observed events, when existing situational ambiguity is likely to cause distortion in the interests of avoiding the risk of "crying wolf."

The device envisioned would be a hierarchical series of indicators (letters or numbers) the operational distinction

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among which would be based on perceived changes in the direction and rate of situational development related to a postulated National Warning Issue. Movement from one level to another would, therefore, reflect intelligence observations indicating alteration of target posture, capabilities and activities which indicate movement closer to (or away from) the conditions or event hypothesized by the NWI. It need not necessarily indicate the acting agency's belief or prediction as to whether that hypothesis will be realized.

If, for example, an NWI envisioning the possibility of an Arab attack on Israel is active, a change in alert level could reflect alterations in tactical dispositions and readiness postures congruent with that eventuality, although not necessarily conclusive evidence that it will materialize. Subsequent alert level increases could reflect pervasiveness of the noted changes and, perhaps, in increased rate of situational movement, particularly where observed phenomena appear to differ from earlier occurrences of similar activity (e.g., exercise vs. cover for attack). In sum, the ultimate purpose of the Alert Level Indication subsystem is to make the Community and Principal Warning Authorities aware that observed changes in the situational environment are sufficiently significant to warrant consideration of issuance of warning

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by the latter in contemplation of hedge action against unresolved (and, perhaps, unresolvable) intent ambiguity.

The initial alert level assigned a particular NWI would be determined by the authority establishing that Issue and would normally be the lowest or baseline level. The same would be true with respect to an NWI established on the basis of observed unusual target activity, the potential implication of which were not apparent at the time of establishment. It will be noted that the various alert levels need have no intrinsic significance or specific definition, insofar as their purpose is to reflect the dynamics of the underlying situational context rather than progressive stages of warning such as "attack is imminent." Their alerting significance, therefore, would lie in the change of levels which, in its progressive movement, would parallel observed situational evolution toward or away from the circumstances or outcome postulated by the relevant NWI.

An increase in the alert level associated with an active NWI could be effected by any authority or organization authorized to establish a Warning Issue. At the time of such change, the initiator would be required to report the evidential and/or analytical basis upon which that action was predicated. Reduction of alert level could be

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effected only by a PWA or the entity that last increased it, ultimate termination of an NWI only by a PWA or the authority who established it, in both cases accompanied by the aforementioned rationale.

All NIWS reports issued by Community components against an active NWI would be required to indicate the established Intelligence Alert Level for that Issue and to specifically note a change in level, along with a synopsis of the evidence provided by the originator of the change. Should one component disagree with the level change (or its underlying rationale) initiated by another it could present contrary evidence and analysis in its own reporting, but must reflect the established alert level. The existence of situational ambiguity, particularly that concerning intentions, could not be cited as the principal basis for disagreement.

NIWS Coordinating Element

The requirement for an active organizational component of NIWS derives from the necessarily interactive nature of the Principal Warning Authorities functional relationship with the Community's line production elements. As indicated by the analysis presented earlier (paragraphs 14 ff), the more subtle and varied nature of the intelligence input

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necessary to support of warning related to hedge action consideration requires the PWA assume an active role in guiding and coordinating the collection and analysis process so as to focus attention and resources on those aspects of National Warning Issues most relevant to their concerns at any particular time. In addition, the PWA will serve as the medium for transmitting the concerns and incremental support requirements of decisionmaking authorities into the indications and warning intelligence production process.

Further, the NIWS Coordinating Element would provide the mechanism, currently lacking, for focusing Community operations with respect to National Warning Issues across organizational lines (paragraph 9 ff). Effective support of the PWA and, hence, of National decisionmaking authority requires the existence of a central entity that would be knowledgeable of the nature and level of Community collection and analysis operations undertaken with respect to a given situational context; capabilities available to expand such coverage, their anticipated information yield and the impact of their diversion on other Community tasks. In addition, the Element would provide a common point of contact for Community production components, program managers and consumers engaged in coverage of an NWI or operationally affected by

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the underlying situation, thereby reducing current reliance on bilateral interaction which tends to create ambiguity within the Community by causing varying levels of knowledgeability and awareness to exist among agencies and within individual agencies.

In the latter regard, an important function of the Element would be to mitigate the adverse effects of highly restrictive dissemination of sensitive source intelligence and information pertaining to US operations and intentions on indications and warning analysis and production. As illustrated in Annex B, where one agency or several people within an agency are in possession of relevant information which is withheld from others, the effect on the latter is highly dysfunctional both operationally and psychologically and serves to increase the Community's vulnerability to situational ambiguity.

It is recognized that such restrictions are, nevertheless, a fact of life unlikely to be completely eliminated. However, the NIWS Coordinating Element, representing the Principal Warning Authorities in continuous contact with Community production and collection elements, can provide guidance based on all data available to the PWA without

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having to reveal the specific nature or origin of that portion considered highly sensitive. In short, as a Community organization not specifically representative of any individual agency or intelligence source, the NIWS coordinating element could serve, in effect, as authoritative cover for sensitive source data necessary to effective Community operations.

The requirement for continuous operation of the coordinating element, as opposed to its activation upon perception of the imminence or inception of a "crisis," derives from the hedge action support aspect of the PWA mission and the premium placed on early deterrent action (paragraph 6). While some crises will undoubtedly occur suddenly and without warning, most are preceded by periods of situational development which, to the extent they do not provide opportunity for crisis avoidance action, would permit efficient transition of Community operations from "normal" to crisis management support mode. Thus, the NIWS Coordinating Element would also be designed to be the basis of the Community crisis management support facility currently lacking (paragraph 18 ff).

The NIWS element envisioned would be of relatively small size (normal staff complement 5-8 people), its capabilities designed to be augmented by prearranged plan based

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on developments in the situational environments being monitored. Twenty-four-hour operations, although desirable, would not be mandatory during periods of normal operations. A PWA or the element's chief could alter the warning level and basis of operations incrementally at his discretion, thereby reducing dependence on common perception of the existence of a "crisis" for implementation of ad hoc or standby mechanisms.

In scope, the element's substantive area of concern would be worldwide, encompassing all political and/or military situations with potential for impact on US security or US interests, including extranational activities such as terrorism. However, its responsibilities with respect to a given situational context would become active only when a National Warning Issue is established covering that context. The occurrence of an unforewarned crisis would cause automatic establishment of an NWI.

Upon establishment of an NWI, the NIWS element would:

- determine from the establishing authority, the specific concerns, information and insights underlying the NWI; when established by a decision-making authority, determine critical thresholds

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or indicators, if any, in situational development which may be related to US policy or hedge action considerations;

- where an NWI is not established by a Principal Warning Authority, apprise the latter regarding basis for establishment, situational development to date, current Community collection and analytical posture, capability to increase coverage, estimated probability of acquiring data critical to determining rate and duration of situational development and actor intentions;
- provide to Community collection and processing components PWA and decisionmaker-derived guidance intended to focus operations on thresholds and indicators of situational developments germane to determination of a requirement to issue warning in contemplation of hedge action;
- coordinate overall collection and analytical coverage of NWI related contexts with respect to capability for detection of key situational changes and insuring complementary interaction

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- among different sensors, sources and intelligence production elements focused on the context;
- promote substantive interaction among analysts addressing an NWI context by providing a common point of reference and source of information; assure that no agency's analysis or reporting is distorted by lack of information available to other agencies and analysts;
 - monitor intelligence acquired during the course of the NWIs operational life, advising PWA of significant indicators or events in situational development and providing to production and collection elements resulting modifications in PWA support guidance;
 - upon perception of crisis development, make timely adjustments in capabilities to coordinate Community operations and expanded decisionmaker support so as to promote orderly transition to crisis management functions; serve as medium of interaction between the PWA and Community collection and production components in focusing crisis management support on National decisionmaker requirements;

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- provide support to post-mortem review of NWI and crisis management support performance, as required.

Conduct of the foregoing operations by the NIWS coordinating element would be effected through existing resource and program management channels and organizations; the element would not engage in technical management or tasking of production and collection resources, but rather would emphasize substantive data requirements reflecting situational development and underlying warning and crisis management requirements. Similarly, the element would not engage in analysis and reporting operations with respect to NWI situations.

However, the element's facility is envisioned as the permanent base of operations for National Intelligence Situation Report Task Forces when activated. Basic faults in present NISR procedures are 1) the task forces are superimposed upon existing facilities and organizations unprepared to integrate them effectively under conditions of high operational stress and 2) the task forces are activated after a crisis begins, which makes their services unavailable during critical warning periods. The foregoing proposal would eliminate these shortcomings by providing an established

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infrastructural basis for NISR operations and permitting activation of the task forces at the discretion of the PWA and the Chief of the coordinating element in support of warning-related as well as crisis management operations.

Support of the NIWS coordinating element would be provided by existing Community operations centers, either by colocation with one of them or by remote communications switching. Either approach would avoid the costs associated with establishment of a primary communications facility and would provide the basic traffic screening support necessary to permit the NIWS element to operate effectively with a small staff.

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